

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 19, 2006. Claims 1 to 47 remain pending in the application, of which Claims 41 to 47 have been withdrawn due to a restriction requirement. Claims 1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 31, 33 and 35 are the independent claims currently under consideration. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Office Action made the restriction requirement of Claims 41 to 47 final, and those claims have been withdrawn from further consideration. While Applicants disagree with the reasons for the restriction, Applicants are currently deciding whether to petition from the restriction and therefore, Claims 41 to 47 have not yet been cancelled.

Claims 25 and 34 were objected to for informalities that have been attended to by amendment. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, due to informal antecedence concerns. While minor in nature, the points noted in the Office Action have been attended to by amendment and therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112 rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 3, 5, 9, 12 to 15, 18, 23 to 25 and 27 to 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,378,070 (Chan). Claims 4 and 36 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Chan in view of Newton's Telecom Dictionary (Newton), and Claims 6 to 8, 10, 11, 16, 17, 19, 20 to 22, 26, 37 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Chan in view of what appears to be Official Notice taken by the Examiner. The rejections are respectfully traversed and the

Examiner is requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in light of the following deficiencies of the applied art.

The present invention provides an easy way for hotel guests to upload documents from their hotel room and to then have them printed by a hotel printer by merely swiping their room key at the printer. According to the invention, when a hotel guest connects a client computer (e.g., a laptop in their hotel room) to a local area network which includes a hotel server, the hotel server detects the connection, and assigns a network address (e.g., an IP address) to the detected client computer. The hotel guest then performs an operation to upload print data to a print service provider (PSP) server. When the hotel guest performs the upload operation, the assigned network address (i.e., location information) is also uploaded to the PSP server transparent to the hotel guest. The PSP server, upon receiving the uploaded print data and location information, queries the hotel server for identification information of the hotel guest. It should be noted that the PSP server utilizes the uploaded location information (i.e., IP address) to refer to a database in order to determine the hotel server that it is to query for the identification information. The hotel server, upon receiving the query from the PSP server for identification information corresponding to the assigned network address, determines the identification information corresponding to the assigned network address received in the query, and responds to the query with the determined identification information. Since the hotel guest is registered with the hotel, personal information (e.g., name, address, credit card number, etc.) of the guest is maintained by the hotel server. The hotel server also knows the IP address assigned to the guest's room and can therefore cross-reference the assigned IP address provided by the PSP server in the query with the guest's information so as to determine the

identification information that is to be returned to the PSP server. The PSP server receives the identification information from the hotel server apparatus as a response to the query, and stores the received identification information in correspondence with the uploaded print data. Then, when the user wants to print their print job, they can simply go to a hotel printer and input their identification information (e.g., swipe their room key, input a password, etc.) at the printer. The input identification information is transmitted to the PSP server by the printer, and in response to receiving the identification information, the PSP server determines whether print data with the identification information correlated thereto is stored in the server. If so, the PSP server transmits the print data to the printer. As a result, the hotel guest merely performs a simple operation of connecting their laptop to a data port in their hotel room, and then chooses an option to upload print data; the remaining processes to assign an IP address, obtain the guest's ID information and to correlate it with the print data are performed transparent to the guest.

Referring specifically to the claims, Claim 1 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information and location information, determining identification information based on the uploaded location information, correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined identification information with the uploaded print data information, inputting the identification information at a printing device connected to the network, transmitting the print data information having the correlated identification information from the printing service provider to the printing device, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Claims 7 and 29 are directed to computer process steps and a computer medium, respectively, and substantially correspond to Claim 1.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 7 and 29, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of uploading, via a network, to a printing service provider, print data information and location information, determining identification information based on the uploaded location information, correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined identification information with the uploaded print data information, and transmitting the print data information having the correlated identification information from the printing service provider to the printing device when the identification information is input at the printing device.

Chan merely teaches retrieving a secure print job using a smart card. According to the patent, a print job is encrypted using private/public keys of a user and the job is uploaded to a print server where the job is securely stored. When a user inserts their smart card in a reader at a printer, the user's information contained on the smart card is transmitted to the print server, whereby the print server decrypts the print job and transmits the job to the printer. Thus, Chan, at best, merely teaches uploading the user's information together with the print data, and then printing the print job at a printer when the user inputs their identification information at the printer. Chan however, fails to teach the claimed process of uploading location information with the print data, and then determining identification information based on the uploaded location information, and correlating the determined identification information with the print data. That is, in Chan, the user inputs their identification information via the smart card and thus, a smart card is required in order

to perform the necessary identification information correlation. In contrast, in the present invention, the user does not need a smart card and in fact, does not need to upload the identification information themselves. Instead, the location information of where the upload is being performed is transparently uploaded to the print service provider server, whereby the print service provider server determines the identification information (e.g., by querying the hotel server using the uploaded location information) from the uploaded location information. Chan simply fails to teach, or to even suggest any such process. Accordingly, Claims 1, 7 and 29 are not anticipated by Chan.

It is noted that the Office Action merely makes a bald assertion that such features would be inherent in Chan. Specifically, the Office Action makes unsupported contentions in paragraph 7 that the foregoing features would be inherent so the system would know where the print data information is being uploaded from. Not only are the Office Action's assertions incorrect, they are simply contrary to what is required for a showing of anticipation under § 102. Specifically, the use of location information in Chan is simply not needed, nor is it taught, since the only information that needs to be uploaded, and indeed the only information that is uploaded, is the user's identification information read from the smart card. Utilizing a smart card reader, wherever the reader may be located, is all that is needed and there is no need for location information to be uploaded in Chan.

Moreover, the use of a smart card is one unnecessary expense that the invention aims to avoid because smart cards require additional expense to manufacture and distribute, and are fairly limited in their availability to users. By using the hotel guest's location information instead of a smart card, and then having the printing service provider

server obtain the user's identification information directly from the hotel server transparent to the user, the invention is not only less expensive, but less cumbersome in its processing than the smart card process described in Chan. Thus, again, the invention of Claims 1, 7 and 29 is simply not anticipated by Chan.

As for the application of Newton's Telecom Dictionary against the claims, Applicants note that the cited dictionary does not include a publication date, nor does the Form PTO-892 provide a publication date. Therefore, Applicants traverse the rejections on the grounds that Newton is not prior art to the subject application and request that the Examiner provide the publication date.

In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, Claims 1, 7 and 29, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

In a related aspect of the invention, Claims 9 and 14 are directed to the respective servers that perform the various functions of the invention. Specifically, Claim 9 is directed to the hotel server and thus is a server apparatus that performs computer executable process steps for printing over a network, comprising a processor for executing computer executable process steps, and a memory medium storing the computer executable process steps, the computer executable process steps comprising (a) detecting connection of a client computer to a local area network connected to the server apparatus, (b) assigning a network address to the detected client computer, (c) receiving a query from another server apparatus connected to the network for identification information corresponding to the assigned network address, (d) determining the identification information corresponding to the assigned network address received in the query, and (e) responding to the query from the another server apparatus with the determined identification information.

Claim 14 is directed to the print service provider server and thus is a server apparatus that performs computer executable process steps for printing over a network, comprising a processor for executing computer executable process steps, and a memory medium storing the computer executable process steps, the computer executable process steps comprising (a) receiving, via the network, uploaded print data information and location information, (b) querying another server apparatus corresponding to the location information for identification information corresponding to the location information, (c) receiving the identification information from the another server apparatus in response to the query, (d) storing the received identification information in correspondence with the uploaded print data information, (e) receiving the identification information from a printing device, and (f) in response to the received identification information, transmitting to the printing device the print data information stored in correspondence to the identification information.

The applied art is also not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 9 and 14. With regard to Claim 9, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a server receiving a query from another server apparatus connected to a network for identification information corresponding to a network address assigned by the server to a client computer upon detection by the server of the client computer being connected to a area network, the server determining the identification information corresponding to the assigned network address received in the query, and responding to the query from the another server apparatus with the determined identification information. With regard to Claim 14, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a server receiving, via the network, uploaded print data

information and location information, querying another server apparatus corresponding to the location information for identification information corresponding to the location information, receiving the identification information from the another server apparatus in response to the query, and storing the received identification information in correspondence with the uploaded print data information.

As discussed above, Chan does not teach the uploading of print data and location information to a server, much less that the server then queries another server for identification information corresponding to the uploaded location information, and then correlates and stores the identification information with the uploaded print data and location information. Accordingly, Claims 9 and 14, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are also not anticipated by Chan and are therefore believed to be allowable.

Claim 18 includes features along the lines of Claim 1, but is directed to an aspect of the invention in which key information (e.g., hotel room key information) is determined in place of the identification information of Claim 1. Specifically, Claim 18 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information, location information and user identification information, determining key information based on the uploaded user identification information, correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined key information with the uploaded print data information, inputting the key information at a printing device connected to the network, transmitting the print data information having the correlated key information from the printing service provider to the printing device, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Claim 31 is a computer process steps claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 18.

The applied art of Chan is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 18 and 31, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information, location information and user identification information, determining key information based on the uploaded user identification information, correlating, at the printing service provider, the determined key information with the uploaded print data information, and transmitting the print data information having the correlated key information from the printing service provider to the printing device when the key information is input at the printing device.

As stated above, Chan does not upload location information with print data, and then use the location information to determine identification information. Chan also does not teach the features of uploading print data, location information and user identification information, and then determining key information corresponding to the uploaded user identification information. Rather, in Chan, the key information (which is encryption key information) is uploaded with the print job as part of the encrypted print job. Therefore, there is no need to determine key information for decrypting the print job in Chan and thus, no need to determine key information based on the uploaded user identification information. Accordingly, Claims 18 and 31, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are not believed to be anticipated by Chan and are therefore believed to be allowable.

Claim 35 is directed to another related aspect of the invention regarding printing by hotel guests. Specifically, Claim 35 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, to a printing service provider, print data information and hotel guest information, inputting, at a printing device, the hotel guest information, transmitting the uploaded print data information to the printing device in response to the inputting step, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

The applied art of Chan is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claim 35, and in particular is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of uploading, to a printing service provider, print data information and hotel guest information, inputting, at a printing device, the hotel guest information, transmitting the uploaded print data information to the printing device in response to the inputting step, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Chan merely uploads intended recipient identification information with the print job, where the identification information is obtained from the recipient's smart card. There simply is no disclosure or suggestion that the intended recipient's information is hotel guest information, which is uploaded with print data, or that, when the hotel guest information is input at a printing device, the uploaded print data having the associated hotel guest information is transmitted to the printing device for printing. While Chan may be similar in some respects, it is nonetheless different in that it fails to teach the use of the claimed hotel guest information. Thus, Claim 35, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable over Chan.

Turning now to Claims 24 and 33, they are directed to another related aspect of the invention regarding restricting use of particular printers by requiring users to register with the network and then providing authorization credentials to each user for particular printers. Specifically, Claim 24 is directed to a method of printing over a network, comprising the steps of uploading, via the network, to a printing service provider, print data information and associated user identification information, inputting the user identification information at a printing device connected to the network, determining whether a user corresponding to the user identification information input in the inputting step is a registered user authorized to print at the printing device, in a case where the determining step determines a positive result, transmitting the print data information having associated user identification information corresponding to the input user identification information to the printing device, and printing the print data information on the printing device.

Claim 33 is a computer medium claim that substantially corresponds to Claim 24.

The applied art of Chan is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 24 and 33, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of determining whether a user corresponding to user identification information input at a printing device is a registered user authorized to print at the printing device, and in a case where a positive result is determined, transmitting print data information having associated user identification information corresponding to the input user identification information to the printing device.

The Office Action fails to even allege any disclosure in Chan of determining whether or not a user is authorized to use a particular printer. Indeed, in Chan, the user can apparently use any printer, without restriction, that has a smart card reader and that is part of the printing network. In contrast, the invention of Claims 24 and 33 provides a way to restrict use of printers within the network by having all users register, and then associating particular printers with each user. Thus, when the user inputs their identification information at a printer, a determination is made whether or not the user is authorized to use the particular printer. Chan simply fails to teach any such registration or authorization determination feature. Accordingly, Claims 24 and 33, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are also believed to be allowable.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

/Edward Kmett/

Edward A. Kmett
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No.: 42,746

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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